Essay on the Common Law of Ruanda

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Preface

101 563 Beyond the eastern shore of Lake Kivu extends a country of high hills called Ruanda. Nestling in banana groves, innumerable huts cling to the hillside, their smoke rising to the sky, and on the summits the brisk wind sways the pink grasses of the pastures where long-horned cattle graze. The exceptionally dense population con- [161] sists of about 3,000,000 Bahutu of Bantu origin who are dominated by some tens of thousands of Batutsi, Hamitic shepherds who have probably come down from the Ethiopian plateaus. Finally, here and there, Batwa pygmoids, potters and hunters, live apart from the other natives who despise them.

183 671 Europeans who first studied the customs of the country discovered to their surprise that they showed a number of points in common with our feudalism. The tenure of land and of cattle as well as [643] the dependence of persons are under a [4] strict regulation which the ruler of Ruanda has the absolute power to modify but which has, in fact, remained unchanged throughout the ages.

• 177 183 Our occupation has obviously had the effect of modifying the customs in many ways. For example, we could not approve of the brutal evictions and attempts on life and liberty made in the name of the right of the strongest. Evangelization has also introduced into the heart of the native society notions of justice and gentleness which are very different from the natives' original conceptions. However, despite 177 the efforts of our civil servants and our missionaries to attack what is 183 most to be condemned in it, native customs still largely holds its 563 sway due to the influence of the great Batutsi chiefs, who are eager to maintain their authority intact, and also due to that of the sorcerers, toothsayers, rain makers, and many others, who attempt to maintain the traditional law by playing on the credulity and superstitious mind of the Banyarwanda [Banyaruanda] and thus protect their prestige and their revenues. In addition, while realizing the protection we give them in repressing arbitrary actions, the Bahutu submit to the changes we

177 have brought to their customs rather than truly adhere to them. This
183 passive attitude is due to an inveterate fatalism which makes them
563 bow before the undisputed master, the Mututsi, and also to the antiquity of custom which makes it as respectable as an almost divine institution.

671 As is the case in the Belgian Congo and generally in [5] Black Africa, the common law contains not only juridical rules applicable to persons, property, and society, it also contains religious and magic regulations, various recipes, etc. Such as it is, it forms a disparate yet solid whole which gives the solution to problems arising from the individual and collective life of the Banyarwanda.

671 The common law of Ruanda, applicable to a homogeneous
184 population, is the same everywhere, except in the north on the
563 frontier of Kivu and Uganda, where the authority of the Batutsi over the Bahutu could not assert itself as in the rest of the country. This independence has resulted in the substitution of the administration of the Bahutu clan and family chiefs for that of the Hamite officials.

114 Those who have known Ruanda and its people best are the members of the Society of Missionary Fathers of Africa. The Reverend Fathers Lupias, Schumacher, Arnoux, Pagès, and Hurel have published, in the Anthropos and Congo reviews (among others) and in numerous monographs, elaborate studies on different aspects of the social, political, religious, and intellectual life of the Banyarwanda. The territorial governors Lenaerts and Sandrart have also brought fruitful contributions to the knowledge of Ruanda common law.

121 Nevertheless, we do not believe that a more or less complete account of the customs of private and public law of Ruanda has ever been prepared. This is what we have modestly attempted to do in the [125] present work by inserting observations gathered in a questionnaire set up especially to facilitate [6] the study of native law (1). We have

1. J. Vanhove, Questionnaire de Sociologie juridique, Brussels, printer Lesigne, 1939.

not been able to go into the details of all the institutions of which some, particularly those relative to cattle contracts, would alone require a whole volume.

124 But, in spite of the limited time we could devote to this account of the customs, we believe we have given the essential points

837 husband and returns to her parents. The latter will attempt to persuade
586 her to return to her husband, for if she refused they would be obliged to refund the dowry.

The husband who finds out that his wife has committed adultery (gusambana, lit., to take another man) enjoins her not to do it again. The second time he strikes her. If she continues, he repudiates (gusendwa) her publicly. A repudiated wife is brought into disrepute and finds it difficult to marry again. Sometimes the adulterous wife is sent away at night, out of consideration for the family, so that her offense is not known by everybody. [29]

837 Formerly, if the husband surprised his wife in the act, he
586 would have the man arrested and beaten. Then before witnesses he
684 would repudiate his wife. If the accomplice was a nobleman like
563 himself, he was allowed to leave with the woman. But, usually, if he was married, he would return to his wife who would merely make a jealous scene. When the lover was a Mututsi umugaragu he was deprived of his property and exiled far away. If he was a Muhutu, the husband could demand from the Mwami permission to impale him like a cattle thief, or else he would thrash him soundly and have him driven away from the hill. An accomplice of the Mwami's adulterous wife was always killed. In none of these cases was the woman seriously ill-treated.

684 Our occupation has put a stop to cruel punishments, and at the
586 present time the wife's accomplice is not punished at all. Adultery
177 leads only to pecuniary reparation (itshyiru) by the lover. On the other hand, divorce is pronounced to the husband's benefit and the dowry is refunded to him, at least if there are no children by the marriage.

848 If the adulterous woman is pregnant, she will always claim that
586 the child she is expecting is her husband's. Being in doubt, the hus-
837 band takes the child (umusambanano) (1) as soon as it is weaned. He

1. General term designating an illegitimate child, including that born of adultery or incest.

also provides for his wife's needs but does not consent to take up again their life in common.

If the husband is sure that the child is the fruit of adultery, he has nothing more to do with his wife, and her parents adopt the child.

643 of his great chiefs to cede it to him. The latter yields with good
[425] grace and usually receives some cattle in exchange.

643 The Mwami is an absolute monarch by divine right who
661 knows no other rule but his will, even his caprice. (2) In the past,
692

2. Hence the proverb: Luyose higirwa n'Unwami, "all depends on the King."

before our occupation, he could with impunity torture, mutilate, or kill anyone who had displeased him. His criminal sentences conformed to the customs of the country, which acknowledged this [87] formidable right, and no one thought of rebelling against his decisions (1).

● [177]

1. The Mwami's right of life and death was abolished in 1917 at the time of the occupation of the country by our troops.

In the same way he is high judge and makes the final settlement in disputes, even the slightest, among his subjects.

Finally, the king is the supreme legislator of the people. With the help of the abiru, he sees that the common law is kept, but he has the sole power of modifying the country's law if and whatever he wishes.

643 He announces his decisions (amategeko) at the door of his rugo,
[692] where people from all parts have congregated to pay homage or demand justice. The intumwa (messengers) are then charged to make known the Mwami's orders to the people of the different provinces.

643 In addition to his Mututsi name (Musinga, Rudahigwa, etc.),
551 the Mwami receives on his accession a king's name (Yuhi, Mutara, etc.). These names are repeated periodically; thus the present Mwami is Mutara III.

The king is sometimes given a surname such as Rwabugiri Sezisoni (Merciful, Clement) (2).

[192]

2. Foreign word originating in Buhima, east of Ruanda.

1:Vanhove--93A G-5 (ca. 1935) 1941 FO42 Rundi FO42

[opp. p. 107]

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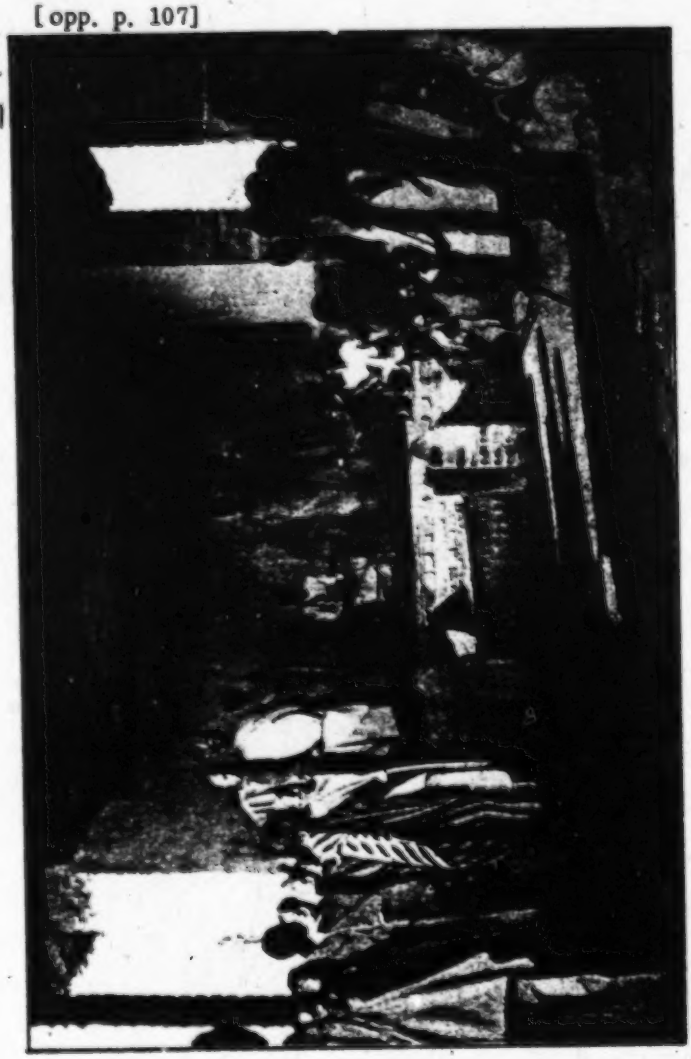
695
●177



One of the many native tribunals instituted since the Belgian occupation.

(Official photograph, Colonial Office)

563 extremely suspicious; I have rarely seen a Mutwa ["mu-" is prefix for singular] laugh. They are an old, tired race of people, approaching extinction in the not too distant future. For this reason it is high time that the remnants of this people be methodically studied by an ethnological expert during an extended stay. This seems to me to be one of the most rewarding tasks to be accomplished in our East Africa which is so rich in ethnological problems.

The agricultural Bahutu, the main population of Urundi, [462] number approximately one and a half million and belong to the so-called basic Bantu of central East Africa, as also do the Wanjamwesi [Nyamwezi]. According to their traditions, they [173] came to Urundi from the east, that is, from the direction of the southern end of Lake Victoria and spread farther and farther west, clearing the forests. They speak almost the same Bantu [197] dialect as the inhabitants of Ruanda and those of Uha. Strangely enough, their conquerers, the Hamitic Batussi, and the tribe they subjugated, the Batwa, also speak only this Bantu dialect, while in the neighboring states to the east and north the entire population speaks Kinjoro ["Ki-" is a prefix indicating language], in certain parts also Kissumbwa. (Regarding the remnants of an older Kirundi dialect, see p. 148.) On the [144] other hand, in Urundi and Ruanda the Bantu have changed their ethnic and somatic character somewhat under the influence of [177] their Hamitic conquerors. These, the Batussi, have assumed within the few centuries of their conquest the language, dress (barkcloth), and many customs of the Bantu, but in exchange they have given them something of their blood, their type of dwelling (round huts), their big-horn cattle, and their political organization.

Nothing is known of the history of the Bahutu of Urundi and Ruanda in the period before the rule of the Batussi. Only in conjunction with their Batussi conquerors do the Bahutu step into the light of African history. From then on there exists a history of the Barundi, the political community consisting of Batussi nobility, Bahutu people, and Batwa pariahs (see p. 151 [not translated]).

304 171 around Lake Victoria, among the Bassuwi, Basindja, Baha, Wassumbwa, etc. -- while, according to H. Rehse, the Basiba [Haya] do not tattoo themselves -- so it is much more likely to assume diffusion from the Bantu and Nilotes to the Batussi and a further development of tattooing by the latter. The tattoos of the Somali, Galla, Massai [Masai], etc., look quite different. A report by H. H. Johnston gives some indication of the wider context. According to him, the crescent-shaped scar tattoo, of which he gives a photograph (No. 17, Vol. II, p. 569), is also found among the Bakonjo [Konjo], who are probably the oldest Bantu race [30] in Unjoro, Toro, and Ankole, while the large mass of the Banjoro [Nyoro] in Unjoro, who are an important mixed race consisting of Bantu, Nilotic, and Bahima elements, do not tattoo themselves.

304 In Urundi I did not observe any tattooing on women and children. It was impossible to find out anything definite about the meaning of the patterns. I would doubt that they are intended to represent horns of cattle, as has been claimed by a missionary.

"Decorative disfigurements" of the ears (ear blocks), nose (nose pegs), the lips (pelele), the teeth (notches or filing), or other parts of the body are found in Urundi neither among the Batussi nor among the Bahutu, and this is also true of Ruanda. The Batwa, however, sharpen the two upper incisors. Also, neither cutting of the genitalia among either sex, deformation of the head, nor other such things are practiced. It is not until one descends to the west, east, or south from the interlacustrine plateau that one once more finds tribes with disfigurements of the body.

[287] 439 177 Urundi is still the country of clothing made from barkcloth (impusu). Except for the peripheral areas in the southeast, south, and west where foreign trade, to which the rest of the country has been barred until recently, supplies cotton material, a piece of "Amerikani" or a cotton blanket used for clothing is still a rarity in Urundi. It was not until recently that more cotton material was introduced into the country by the few licensed traveling merchants, the missions, and the passing caravans

439 of officials and military men. The natives eagerly snatch it up.
177 Yet at the time of King Kisabo the chiefs strictly banned the wearing of cotton material for they suspected quite rightly that, together with the foreign merchants and goods, other influences would soon be introduced which might undermine their sovereignty.

29/ Apart from the bark material which predominates, goat skins (ikikoba, urusato) are also worn as loincloths, with the fur side inward; they are the only clothing for children, poor people, and mostly for the Batwa also (Plate 7). In northeastern Urundi, in the Bugufi district, hide cloaks are worn more often than those made from bark (No. 8, p. 61). All over Urundi the [854] women, in addition to the loincloth of hide or bark material, around the upper part of the body wear a quadrilateral piece of hide or bark material, tied in a knot at the shoulder; it is used to carry the youngest child on the back. The men wear a larger, toga-like garment, held up by a knot at the shoulders and falling down over the knees. The knots at the shoulders are often decorated with a few large tassels of dry banana bast which look like gigantic major's epaulets (Plate 11a, 14a).

287 Barkcloth (impusu) -- Stuhlmann calls it "bast felt" (No.
386 32a, p. 35) -- has an advantage over hide and cotton materials in that it is very light, warm, and permeable, but its production requires work, and since it frays out after longer wear, it soon becomes full of holes and frayed and looks very shabby (Plates 9, 12a). *Add to this the usually very dismal, dark gray color.* By nature it is brown. In a very few cases it is dyed red with laterite or plant juices (for mourning), or it is decorated with [531] black designs shaped like spindles, leaves, or circles against its natural reddish-brown background. Usually it is dyed a dark gray with wood ashes, argillite, or mud from the swamps, and then it is a deplorable sight. When a large number of people dressed in this manner happen to stand together in a crowd, the many black-clothed figures, [31] combined with the smooth-shaven skulls and flashing spears which are carried by everyone, form a very impressive total picture of great somberness. We again find this simple method of dyeing in Unjoro, the most northerly area to which the Bahima extend; Vandeleur writes

412 (uruwati) made of two thin boards held together by several
411 wrappings. In the same manner as the quiver, the sheath is often
[531] decorated with carved crescents or zigzag patterns (Fig. 9).
The knives are often carried by a strap running from the right shoulder to the left hip, like a shoulder belt. The much smaller
412 knives, 10 to 15 centimeters [35] long, which are found more often and which are of the same shape and used for smaller carving jobs, are either worn on a string around the neck or over the left upper arm. Only in western Lower Urundi on Lake
[177] Tanganyika can we find knives with fine copper wire nicely wound around them; there they are due to Congo influence
[326] and are produced by Wawira [Bira] blacksmiths (No. 19, 133). In Upper Urundi proper, the Bahutu and especially the Batwa blacksmiths are the suppliers of knives.

411 Fighting clubs (uwuhiri) which were once generally used all over the region have become rather rare in Urundi; as among the Massai and the Wadschagga [Chagga] these former weapons have been degraded into a show piece or toy of the men. They consist of a beautifully planed piece of hardwood, about one third of a meter in length, which at the end has been carved into three or four edges and at the handle end is slightly thickened.

411 Shields (ingabo) are much more rare. They have com-
554 pletely lost their importance as a weapon of defense and, as in Ruanda, they have become merely the emblem of a chief or of a family (perhaps the escutcheon of a clan) (Plate 44). The king possesses several shields and each chief and his bodyguards have one each which are painted differently. The Batwa do not have any shields and are not allowed to carry any. The round shield, up to one half meter in diameter, is carved of wood it has a wooden grip and is painted with white and red segments of circles of various types. There are also shields which have reeds plaited around them (see pp. 80-81 and Plate 53) and others of identical shape made of cowhide which occur even more rarely. The same shape and ornamentation of the wooden shields and quivers recur both among the northern Bahima in Ruanda and among the southern ones in Ufipa (cf. illustration in No. 47, p. 76).

244 cucumber. They are eaten as a vegetable. Gourds with
[415] variously-shaped fruits are cultivated mainly for use as vessels.

The oil palm (ingasi), which occurs in Urundi only in
314 the interlacustrine area, is not really a plant cultivated by the
[177] Barundi but a wild tree which has been introduced from West Africa. The Barundi use its fruit. The oil palm forest of Mtara is approximately 12 kilometers north of Usumbura. It covers about 800 hectares with 400,000 to 500,000 oil palms (Elaeis guineensis). Closer to Usumbura there is a forest of 200,000 to 220,000 palms, and farther south of Usumbura, stretching to the vicinity of Ujiji, there are other stocks of trees with 300,000 to 400,000 palms. The systematic cultivation of oil
[177] palms was first introduced to the Tanganyika area by the Europeans, but at the present time the forests are exploited neither by Europeans nor by the natives because they are the chief breeding site of the fly that transmits sleeping sickness. For this reason the forests are avoided as much as possible. The
[248] only tree incorporated into their hoe-culture, which is inimical to the cultivation of trees, is the fig from whose bark cloth can be made (see above, pp. 24, 31). This tree is really planted and cared for. The oil palm, however, is only seldom planted by the natives. After dropping from the trees, the nuts thrive easily in the moist soil where oil palm forests usually grow. The majority of the young trees are either pulled up or cut down, and only a few are left standing to replace old dead trees. After cutting down the ripe fruits of the oil palm, they are first scalded in boiling water and then pounded in a mortar until the whole outer layer of flesh containing the oil is detached. The pounded pap is squeezed out by hand into a wooden tub filled with water so that the oil will float on the surface. From there it is scooped
[439] into an earthen pot. It is marketed in smaller pots. Most of it is sold in Ujiji and in the Congo district (Uvira). The Barundi use
[252] the little oil that is left as an ingredient in some of their dishes or
[278] for frying fish, partly also as a skin lotion and as a medicine for the wounds caused by sand fleas (No. 19, p. 291 and 411).
000 Originally the Barundi were not familiar with the use of palm oil

388 Originally the Barundi were not familiar with the use of palm oil
● 177 for making soap; [54] only the people of the Tanganyika area have learned from the Arabs and Wasuaheli how to mix oil with potash to make soap (kifefe) which is traded in fist-sized balls.

222 Apart from the cultivated plants mentioned above, the
262 Barundi and their women and children collect a number of wild plants or parts of these plants to be used as food or condiments. There are, for instance, the stinging nettle, whose leaves are boiled as "spinach," and sorrel, also cooked as a vegetable. The fruit of the eggplant (Solanum esculentum) -- reverted to the wild state? -- is eaten raw or roasted. They also collect edible mushrooms which are eaten either raw or cooked, red pepper
[263] (intore) whose pods are used for seasoning, and various berries eaten as delicacies by women and children, especially blackberries which are abundant everywhere.

241 The location and arrangement of the fields (umurima) in Urundi does not differ much from Ruanda. One thing that soon strikes the observer is that in Urundi, with the exception of the western mountain areas, terraced fields are much more rare than in Ruanda where they cover entire mountain slopes and constitute the characteristics appearance of the cultivated areas. In Urundi the fields extend predominantly over level ground, either on the broad ridges and plateaus or at the bottom of the valleys. They are always close to the huts and, of course, to water. No furrows are drawn on most fields; their surface is merely loosened with a hoe. In the case of freshly cleared land, the pulled grass and shrubs are piled up in the field, left to dry, and burned. Then the ashes, as fertilizer, are worked into the ground with the hoe. A similar method is used at the edge of papyrus swamps. After the water level has receded, the papyrus thicket is cut down over the whole extent of the extremely fertile alluvial land whose surface has dried. The hacked-off papyrus fronds are burned as soon as they have dried out (Plate 22a). Then the roots are dug up, narrow drainage ditches are dug, and the plant ash is spread over the field as fertilizer. Finally sweet potatoes, arrowroot, and beans are planted in the little holes which have been dug. They come up quickly. If land is cleared on a hill slope, the fields are laid out in long narrow strips which follow the contour horizontally. These are made as level as

4. Stimulants

276 The Murundi knows only two narcotics: tobacco and alcohol (beer). The method of cultivating tobacco (itabi) has already been discussed on page 53 . It has also been mentioned that the Barundi, except for old men and women (including the Batwa), do not smoke much tobacco while all of them are inveterate snuff-takers. Their neighbors, the Banjaruanda, as well as the Baganda and Banjoro, are habitual smokers but do not take snuff. This is true of both men and women. This striking difference between them and the Barundi is probably based on the quality of Urundi tobacco which, as a result of insufficient care, is very strong. Wherever tobacco pipes are seen among the Barundi [Fig. 11 appears here in the original text] -- which is mainly in the north and especially in the northwest -- their shapes are the same as those of the Banjaruanda, and the Batwa make them out of black clay in the same manner as in Ruanda (Plate 49 and Fig. 11). The pipe stem is a piece of reed. On Lake Tanganyika [59] water pipes are also used. [177] They are made of a calabash with a clay pipe bowl inserted at the side and have been taken over from the Wawira of the Congo.

Taking snuff (kusomera), on the other hand, is so popular among all Barundi, men, women and half-grown children as to constitute almost a national pastime or "national vice" (Plate 28). If only it were not such an unappetizing habit! Theirs is not the relaxed, almost graceful snuffing, so full of feeling, that one may observe among the Wadschagga of the Kilimanjaro region. Among the latter tribe a little finely ground tobacco powder is poured onto the back of the hand from a small box embroidered with pearls and then gently inhaled with the nose as though they were smelling a flower. The Murundi takes his snuff in the following manner. First of all, he uses three little instruments: a small goat's horn which is the tobacco container (ihembe) and is carried over the shoulder on a string; a wooden bowl for moistening the tobacco (Fig. 12), and a little nose clamp (umunengo) made from a small cleft piece of wood which

[Text continues on page 89]

857 524 is used to make a dress for the doll which is then carried on the back as mothers carry their children.

[65] When they are not drinking or gossiping, the adult 526 men spent their leisure time shooting arrows at a stick placed at a distance of up to 100 meters or more or by lance-throwing contests at any distant object. In the Tanganyika region a quiet 524 sitting game in which only two persons can participate is very popular. It is a game played on a board (ikisoro) resembling [177] our checker board. It is known to the Wasuaheli as mbao and probably has been imported from there to the Tanganyika area by way of Unjamwesi. From Tanganyika it also penetrated to a few chiefs of central Urundi. The board is rounded off at the edges and has four rows of little bowl-shaped hollows of which there are 32 altogether. Small stones or fruit pits are placed in them. By a complicated system of moves and counter-moves by which one opponent may take stones from the other, one player finally wins all the stones of his opponent. A precise description would lead us too far here, and in any case the game is known from the East African coastal areas.

Weule described (loc. cit., p. 52) the game of patience, ikifundo, that is played in Usige on the north shore of Lake [177] Tanganyika. It was probably an import from the Arabs or the Wasuaheli. I have not seen it myself.

There are also other widespread games, as, for instance, the string games, which I have not seen played by children or adults.

535 Dances (ivino, uruvino) are included here since they are to a certain extent mere "games." It is true that only a minority of dances are executed for their own sake as amusement; most of them are connected with some family, social, war, or religious celebration and are danced only on these special occasions. They all resemble each other in form, however, and may be described together here, except the religious ones which we shall discuss in the chapter on "Religion" (see p. 127).

Like the Banjaruanda, the Barundi are enthusiastic dancers and dance whenever they have the opportunity. "To amuse oneself, to play, to sing and to dance are synonymous words. They dance well, elegantly (especially the women), even with

436 An elongated, violet bead, with white stripes, inganga, is more valuable: one inganga bead equals one kete of samsam beads. Still more valuable are the thick white amaguru beads; a double necklace of these is valued at 10 kete of samsam beads. In addition to these, there are, especially in the lake region, medium-sized blue beads and reddish and white ones with a lacquer-like sheen, also large spindle-shaped white beads with red circles, and others. All these types, however, do not have a fixed monetary value, [77] like those mentioned above; their exchange value fluctuates. Yellow, green, and black beads are not accepted anywhere.

435 Naturally, the available stock of beads and the law of supply and demand also determine the value of the "monetary" beads. In general, these were the rates of exchange which formerly applied in the interior: 5 bananas = 1 heller, 1 bunch of about 20 bananas = 1 kete, more than 2 double handfuls of flour = 1 kete, 1 handful of salt = 1 kete, 1 pot of beer = 3 kete, 1 iron hoe = 6 kete, 1 pot of honey = 1 ifundo, 1 goat = 3 ifundo, 1 sheep = 4 ifundo, 1 bull = 5 to 10 ingoje, 1 cow = 20 ingoje. At present, one goat costs as much as 3 to 4 rupees in the interior, and all other prices have risen proportionately.

439 435 Cotton material which was formerly strictly banned by the chiefs is now accepted eagerly in the interior. The most popular brand is the ordinary white "amerikani" of which 1 gora of 30 ells [an ell is between 55 and 80 centimeters] is valued at approximately 12 rupees in the interior. The "lesso" or "kanga," printed materials with brown patterns which are popular in Ruanda, are gradually being introduced all over Urundi.

804 The double handful (kumaschi) or, on the markets, a pumpkin shell of equal capacity is the generally accepted dry measure for flour, grain, beans, etc. Larger items, like manioc roots, sweet potatoes, bananas etc., are sold by the 804 piece. There are no domestic weights. The farsalah (35 pounds 177 Brit.) used all over East Africa since Arab times has only been

804 introduced here through contact with foreigners in the export
177 trade. It is used, for instance, for cattle hides, ivory, and wax.
The use of cowrie shells as money is known neither in
[436] Urundi nor in Ruanda.

3. Handicrafts

463 In his excellent book, Handwerk und Industrie in Ostafrika
433 [Handicraft and Industry in East Africa], (L. Friederichsen & Co., Hamburg, 1910) F. Stuhlmann writes: "It must be emphasized that in Africa handicrafts are almost everywhere only a matter of secondary importance; the basis of the economy is agriculture" (p. 3). This also applies to Urundi where handicrafts are, for the most part, "homework," that is, raw products are worked for one's personal use at home, and only the surplus is traded for the products of others. Home industry, that is, the production in quantity at home for the use of others and for export, exists only for pottery and iron-working. On the other hand, there is
[437] also the practice of paid labor whereby the craftsman is paid for manufacturing items at the house of the person who ordered them, using raw material furnished by this person, for example, in the production of barkcloth, the construction of a hut, and wood carving. Of course there are skillful and unskillful people in every trade and in every family, and the products of the former are naturally preferred to those of the latter. Only in pottery
463 and ironwork is the craft passed on from father to son. It is
462 mainly the Batwa who practice these two crafts and pass them on
563 from generation to generation, but there are also Bahutu families in which pottery and ironwork are hereditary (No. 19, p. 369). Ironwork, wood carving, and the production of barkcloth are exclusively reserved to men, plaiting and basketry to women. Among the Bahutu, pottery, too, is only made [78] by women; among the Batwa it is mainly done by women but to some extent also by men (No. 19, p. 451).

323 Pottery (inkono, pot) is of course practiced predominantly where the suitable type of clay occurs. This is the case in many

285 lidded baskets, long narrow containers for tubes to suck beer,
415 very large baskets with lids which are used as traveling trunks, meal winnowers, plates, grain sacks, sometimes even quivers for arrows, and other things. Very occasionally [80] simple
[531] linear patterns are produced by interlacing strips of bast dyed black. In Urundi this weaving technique is exclusively prac-
[462] ticed by women; only the large flat meal winnowers are manufactured by men (No. 19, p. 577), presumably because they
[237] are calked with cow dung, a product of cattle which women can
[184] have nothing to do with as a matter of principle.

285 The coiling technique is used for making basketry with long, thin, straw or bast rolls, with thread wrapped round them (similar to the beehives of our peasants). These rolls are laid in spiral fashion on top of each other and are tightly fitted by the bast string tied around them; for this reason this is also referred to as the spiral-technique (Plate 50). It is used for producing baskets and bowls with walls which are thicker and more resistant to shock and pressure than those manufactured by the weaving technique. The spiral technique is also employed in making
[415] waterproof cups, the long pointed lids of the gourd bottles used
[482] for beer, and the often very pretty wreath-shaped rings used for
[462] keeping vessels in an upright position and for carrying burdens on the head. This technique is also only practiced by women.
285 Stuhlmann assumes that it is of Hamitic origin (No. 32a, p. 44).
171 This would account for its general geographic distribution and for the high stage of development to which it has been brought in the Batussi states. F. von Luschan also points out that this technique is characteristic of Hamitic tribes or tribes under Hamitic influence, ranging from the Somali to the Ovambo [Ambo] (No. 40, p. 252).

286 Finally we wish to mention the carrying nets which are
352 made of intertwined bast strings simply tied together crosswise. They are hung inside the huts to hold calabashes and other objects (Plate 51). The Barundi could not do without these nets, for even inside the huts plaited work cannot be left standing on the floor since it would be eaten by the termites.

286 The Lake Barundi of the Tanganyika district plait fishing
177 nets with either a wide or narrow mesh in a similar fashion, but

296 this seems to be an art which they learned from the Congolese
[171] Wawira and Wabemba [Bembe] (No. 19, p. 577).

The Barundi are not familiar with the technique of weaving
[287] material for garments. They wear garments made of barkcloth
[291] and hides, and only in recent times have they started to use
[177] European cotton fabrics.

Wood carving (uwuwasi) obviously ranks second to pottery,
322 weaving, and metalworking in a country with as few trees as Urundi. Most carving is done in the western mountain regions where there are still remnants of primeval forest with tall trees.
[438] From there these objects are exported to the almost treeless areas of the interior. The Batwa in particular are good wood
[462] carvers. As among the Bahutu and Batussi, only men engage in wood carving. Everyone makes his own ordinary wooden household objects, such as poles, sticks, pestles for pounding grain, hoe handles, knife handles, and similar objects, since they do not require any particular technical skill. Other woodworking that requires technical knowledge and experience, such as spear shafts, bows, arrows, quivers, wrist discs, milk pails, bellows, shields, and grain mortars, is done by specialists who exchange or sell their products (Plate 52). Moreover, a characteristic feature of the wood carving of the Barundi and Banjaruanda and one which Stuhlmann calls attention to for all African wood carving (No. 32a, p. 28) is that objects are always made from a single piece of wood. Products made of several pieces of wood are extremely rare; both in Urundi and in Ruanda the only ones are knife and dagger sheaths consisting of two flat boards tied
322 together. A combination of wood carving and plaiting tech-
411 niques is found in one type of shield (ingabo) whose oblong wooden
285 plate is covered [81] with plaited work consisting of strips of fig bark and rattan, leaving only the boss in the center of the shield uncovered (Plate 53). This type of shield is extremely rare in Urundi. In Ruanda there are more of these shields covered with plaited work -- ascribed by Stuhlmann to the kulturkreis of the Bahima (No. 32a, p. 30) -- but, nevertheless, they occur only sporadically. They are numerous only near the Uganda border.

322 412 The Barundi do not have a special tool for wood carving, only the two small chopping knives, the sickle-shaped, long-handled cutting knife (Plate 46, No. 4) with which we are already familiar from the discussion of agriculture (p. 49), and the short and long knives which are used for all kinds of daily jobs (Fig. 16). To round and smooth spear shafts, a small piece of wood is stuck on a small double-edged knife, at an angle. Then the knife is moved back and forth along the shaft until the wood has been scraped and given the desired shape. The wooden arm discs, after having been cut from a block of wood, are shaved with a knife and polished with fig leaves (which are probably flinty) until they have the elegant, mathematically correct shape and smooth surface which we admire in them.

[Fig. 16 appears here in the original text.]

[531] The simple parallel linear decorations which are occasionally seen on wooden utensils and calabashes are seldom carved but generally burnt in by a kind of poker-work. For this purpose small notches are made in an old knife or spear point so that several tooth-like points are formed. This iron is made red-hot and then passed over the wood; its points burn a number of absolutely parallel lines into the surface (No. 19, p. 367). Apart from this, saws for cutting wood are as unknown as drills and nails. Because of this, holes are also made in wood by means of red-hot iron. As everywhere else in East Africa where saws are not available, boards or beams are carved from thick logs by chopping and cutting chips and splinters from both sides of the block until a board of the desired thickness remains. For this reason the traveler in these regions can hardly present the chiefs with a more welcome gift than a sturdy handsaw, a hand-drill, hammers, iron nails, and other tools.

322 532 Nowhere in Urundi or Ruanda did I see either human or animal figures scratched or cut into the surface of wood or carved from wood. Only among the Barundi on Lake Tanganyika does one find carved wooden figures, an art which was introduced from the Congo region. Finally, the decorations found [177] 322 531 on many -- not all -- of the wooden [82] hand discs deserve to be mentioned. They are inlaid with iron, copper or brass spirals,

[Text continues on page 124]

281 is treated by the method used for making chamois leather. First of all, the hide is stretched tight on the ground with pegs all around the edges. With a knife the hair and the particles of meat and fat still attached to it are scraped off carefully. When the hide is almost dry, the pegs are removed, it is rubbed with fat or butter and then beaten thoroughly, piece by piece, with both hands until it has become smooth and pliable (No. 19, p. 425). Finally the hide is rubbed with a little white residual soil (kaolin) so as to give it a nice appearance. Hides to be used as blankets are treated in the same manner, but the hair is not removed.

326 In the field of ironwork the performance of the Barundi
177 is good, even excellent. This is really surprising since reportedly the forging technique was brought to Urundi from the northeast, probably from Kissaka, at the time of King Ruganza of Ruands, i.e., approximately 200 years ago. The art was introduced, it is said, by a legendary person, Kigwe.
[412] Van der Burgt writes me that "before that period wooden hoes
[411] were used for cultivating the soil, and arrows and spears were made entirely of wood." An old Mutwa told van der Burgt that in his youth he had seen such wooden utensils himself. According to my observations such wooden hoes and weapons do not exist any more. Van der Burgt is mistaken in assuming that
135 the backwardness of the Urundi iron industry can be explained
316 by the fact that there are no iron ore deposits in Urundi (No. 19,
325 p. 250). I found excellent iron (itschjuma) in the form of limonite and specular iron ore in many places. On the other hand, I can confirm that the Barundi do not know how to mine and smelt these local iron ores. In Ruanda I saw smelting furnaces in full operation, but there are none in Urundi. The
326 Barundi blacksmiths only work iron imported from other areas.
[439] Some of it is imported in the form of hoes from Usindja (southern part of Lake Victoria) with the help of the Baha and Bassuwi, and some of it is European iron wire which is brought into the country by way of Lake Tanganyika. The Bahutu and Batwa blacksmiths convert this imported iron into the forms of hoes, knives, chopping knives, spear points, arrowheads, arm

776 The relation between these two groups is similar to that of the ruling caste of the Batussi to the Bahutu (No. 19, p. 213). They are all personified beings whom we may call simply gods. A whole series of them bears the same names as former historical personalities among the Barundi or neighboring peoples. Everything that is said about them proves that these gods were originally heroes, chiefs, and kings of the people. As a result of their apparently superhuman characteristics and acts, they were worshipped as heroes and have gradually been elevated to the rank of gods. The hero has not been formed after the image of god, but the god after the image of the hero (No. 43, p. 280). Nor are these gods personifications of great natural phenomena, as, for example, the sun, moon, clouds, or thunder. The Murundi regards these phenomena simply as the residence and the expressions of the abasimu who inhabit them but not the personification of individual gods (No. 43, p. 358 ff.).

776 177 The name-bearing hero-gods of the Barundi who have been [120] vested with the characteristics of superhuman personality and immortality are -- judging by the attributes and histories ascribed to them -- partly popular gods of the indigenous Bantu and Batwa and partly an import of the Hamitic conquerors, partly also a mixture of both these elements. Van der Burgt does not believe that the deified heroes were originally Hamitic princes but emphasizes (reported by letter) that "most of the names of the gods belong to Bantu religion and are Bantu words." He maintains that in addition to the language the Batussi also acquired the gods of the Bahutu, but that the Batwa have some gods of their own, for example, Indagarra. However, among the 30 names of Barundi gods listed by van der Burgt (No. 19, p. 214), the following appear to me to be of Hamitic origin, or at least not genuine Bantu gods: Riangombe, Umugassa, Wamara, Kagoro, Ruwambo, Ruhanga, Rugba. Of these, Riangombe (Ljangombe, Djangombi) is also worshipped as a god in the Bahima states of Ruanda, Kisiba, Mpororó, Ankole, and others. He is thought to have been a Ruanda-Mutussi, the pupil of the first Ruhinda, and it is said that he distinguished himself by his great magic power (see also p. 188 [not translated]). Umugassa

776 or Mugascha is worshipped as a god of streams and of rain in
177 Uganda ("Mukessa," see Anthropos III, p. 214), in Ankole, Kisiba, Karagwe (Lake Mugascha), Kissaka, and Ussuwi. According to the tradition of the Basiba, he was a former king of the Sese Islands in the northern part of Lake Victoria (No. 31, p. 128; No. 27, p. 110; No. 34, pp. 518-519). Wamara is worshipped in Ankole and in Kisiba as the spirit of the dead souls. According to Banjankole tradition, he was a king of the Batschwesi in Baera (Uganda) who were a Hamitic people different from the Bahima, and he conquered Ankole. According to Rehse, he was "formerly a great ruler to whom the nations from Nyanza to the Congo State owed allegiance" (No. 31, pp. 126-127; No. 34, p. 520). Kagoro is regarded in Kisiba as a grandchild of Wamara (No. 31, p. 133). Rugaba or Lugaba, who is worshipped as the creator of man and cattle in Kisiba and in Ankole (No. 27, p. 108), was, according to van der Burgt, "the oldest king of the Wahinda" (No. 19, p. 219). Rehse writes of the gods of the Basiba that "the description of this world of spirits would at the same time represent the oldest history of Kisiba as well as that of all the central African countries." This also applies to the hero-gods of the Barundi. It would be a rewarding task to study these religious sources, especially for missionaries!

776 The Basiba worship a supreme god named Rugaba as the creator of the world and the highest giver of grace, but they never offer sacrifices to him (No. 31, p. 125). In the same manner the Barundi and Banjaruanda (No. 28, pp. 1-13) worship Imana. He is never offered sacrifices or prayers, as an unapproachable supreme being. People prefer to turn to gods who are closer to human beings, who have once been human beings themselves, like Riangombe, Kiranga, Wamara, and others. Although he is conceived of as the personified creator and ruler of the world, Imana is the only one in the abode of the gods of the Barundi whose name is sometimes used as a
776 general term for the world of the spirits. Imana is simply "the
778 divine," "the godhead." Imana is also the term for all that is sacred to the Murundi: the sacred trees, the sacred steer, the

797 For all these national, social, and political reasons, the Batussi would also reject Islam if at some time in the future it should attempt to gain a foothold in this country which so far has been hardly accessible to foreign penetration. The memory of the battles they fought against Arab slave hunters only intensifies the Murundi's rejection of it.

The missionaries, however, continue their work untiringly in spite of little expectation of spreading the gospel among the Barundi as long as the Batussi remain the rulers. Such idealism and firmness of belief is indeed admirable. For many years only the Catholic "White Fathers" were active in this area. In 1896 they founded the first mission in Mujaga (east Urundi; Plate 29b), and later they opened other missions in Mugera (central Urundi), Marienberg (west Urundi), Mariensee (north-eastern Urundi). The Protestant Neudettelsbach Mission began its activity in Iruwura (northwest Urundi) only in 1910. The founding of a second mission in northwest Urundi followed in 1912.

797 Due to the predominantly negative attitude of the Barundi, very little cultural work has been accomplished of the kind
● 177 which prepares for and accompanies actual missionary work: teaching basic school subjects, guidance in handicrafts, the spread of innovations in agriculture and stockbreeding. The medical activity of the missionaries seems still to be more efficacious than anything else in winning the confidence of the people.

In the Batussi states of Ruanda and Uha which have been inaccessible to the outside world for such a long time, the position is the same. On the other hand, the adjoining areas of Ussumbwa, Usindja, and Ihangiro, where the people are less divided by differences of caste and race and where there is no strict Batussi rule, have been open to foreign influences for a much longer period and there the work of the missionaries has been far more successful. Only time can tell whether the prospects for Christianization will also improve in Urundi. Most probably this will come about once the power of the Batussi rulers has been destroyed.

No villages

361 Characteristic of the country is the non-existence of villages. Though some habitations may be close to one another, they can never be said to be grouped. [417] Isolated by the compact wooden fence that surrounds them, shut from the outside world by a narrow, easily closing gate, they never look towards any central point that could distinguish some more or less important unit from similar units merely by its being oriented towards that central point. In fact, no such central point ever exists, but cabins appear sprinkled all over the country, in a denser or looser or sometimes discontinued dissemination it is true, but always without any well defined organic nucleus.

No markets

443 Not only in its not having villages is Urundi
439 different from most African countries: neither had it any markets. Before the colonization, markets were only held in the coastal sector of Tanganyika, where their presence can probably be related to the existence of a fishing population. In the interior, the
● [177] first markets originated with German colonists in the vicinity of administrative posts and missions. Foreign trading, concerned only with skins and salt, was in the vicinity of administrative posts and missions. Foreign trading, concerned only with skins and salt, was on a very small scale.

443 Now Africa is almost entirely a village country and it has also been said it is the favourite land for markets. Admittedly, village and market are far from coinciding in space: but they are not entirely unrelated. Village means daily meeting, market periodical meeting. This regular contact between inhabitants of one more or less important region is certainly less frequent in Urundi than elsewhere.

535 I am inclined to compare with this what can be ascertained concerning dancing. Except in the east (Kumoso), the west (Imbo), and the South (Buha), except with the Batwa, except with women and girls (which I confess is not negligible), dancing has neither the form n[illegible]the meaning usual with other popula-
[534] tions; as the drum remains a privilege of the *mwami* (sultan), there is no tom-tom; the chiefs themselves pick the carefully trained war-dancers from the whole of their district: such a dance is meant to exalt the chief, not to be a factor of unity for the male population of a district.

Cattle-breeding and agriculture

224 Except for the Batwa, hunting is of little import-
226 ance to the country's life: for the Batutsi, it is a mere sport without practical utility. The economic significance of fishing is not greater.

231 The social significance of cattle-breeding is considerable, yet its economic importance is smaller than

[p. 13 (B)]

462 Consequently the men folk, even when they do not
461 cultivate their fields themselves, are reasonably certain, except in the case of famine, to find sufficient food to sustain their lives and this gives their activity a peculiar character. Their activities may be directed towards improving their situation, but their existence does not depend on them : if necessary, they will wait a long time and without impatience for expected grants from the great.

444 You see Barundi who buy goods on one market and sell them on another where those goods are dearer. You see also Barundi who sell agricultural wares on one market, and with the money buy a greater amount of the same wares on a market where it is cheaper. Result, a greater amount of wares and of money. It is a curious adaptation of the species of speculation to an old non-monetary economic system.

The evolution in progress

178 Most chiefs have been converted and have accord-
● 177 ingly adopted monogamy : the estate organization based on polygamy must consequently be modified. Belgian administration has deliberately simplified native political methods and considerably reduced its personnel. The numberless services demanded by local leaders have been abolished : some corvées are still enforced, the abolition of others has been made good by allowing to the chiefs a percentage of the taxes paid by their subjects. Considerably fewer followers are attached to the chiefs ; already the *ntore*[3/1] have disappeared and the extension of the clerk (*karani*)-system is making the *bagendanyi*[2/1] obsolete. Markets are more and more numerous and
[436] money has a circulation wider every day because this circulation is necessary if taxes are to be paid. Purely commercial exchanges will eliminate barional ex-

[p. 16 (A)]

3/1 [a type of vassal — Analyst]

2/1 [messenger attendant — Analyst]

178 changes completely. Speculation is gaining ground.
177 Certain cultures are spreading rapidly (cassava, which
[241] grows all the year round and so excludes the threat of famine ; coffee which yields a profit in cash, and helps to pay the tax-collector).

178 Finally, some house-groups have appeared of a type,
177 closer perhaps to town than to village, in the neigh-
361 bourhood of *bomas* (colonial administration centres)
563 or markets. Their inhabitants it is true are mostly foreigners : Belgian officials, European traders (Greeks), Hindus and Arabs, *baswahili* (Islamized negroes). It remains however that they are an entirely new feature in a country with such a widely dispersed population.

Conclusions

361 I thought I could draw your attention to some
571 details of the curious Urundi organization : a dense population, widely dispersed over the cultivable and habitable land according to the geographic possibilities, without any orientation centres (the few habitations of the chiefs cannot be said to produce anything like demographic concentration) ; the small part played by neighbourhood relations, the predominance of intricate, but personal ties, creating man-to-man dependance, or in other words the primacy of the vertical over the horizontal relationships.

Such an organization was possible in a country almost completely closed to foreign influence, without either markets or money, with a hierarchical structure and must be related to conditions both ethnographical and geographical. This organization is
[177 giving way under the influence of European ad-
178] ministration, of the development of trade, and of a new economy based more and more upon monetary transactions.

[p. 16 (B)]

4: Maquet E-5 (1950-1951) 1954 FO42 Rundi FO42

THE KINGDOM OF RUANDA

By J. J. MAQUET

THE world-view of a people refers to a kind of reality which is not directly observable. We can observe things and behaviour, but not ideas or mental attitudes. These have to be inferred. Furthermore, although the concepts and propositions which make up the world-view of the Banyarwanda[1] are all arrived at by induction, they do not possess the same logical status. They are located, so to speak, on different levels of abstraction. Some are arrived at by immediate inference from observation, as when we say, for instance, that for Banyarwanda 'the invisible world is a fearful reality'. This statement may be immediately inferred from the behaviour of the Ruanda people: their words, when they tell us their beliefs about the action of the spirits of the dead, and their behaviour if they are threatened by them. On the other hand, a statement such as 'strictly contractual relationships are inconceivable for a Munyarwanda' is much more abstract because it is reached by successive stages from an analysis of the political organization of Ruanda. The validity of the two kinds of statement is not necessarily affected by their degree of abstraction. Even a proposition which seems very far removed from its factual foundation may be checked by the observation of other relevant facts.

Ideas concerning the place of man in the world, his destiny, his main values, his attitudes in relation to his fellow men, the rules of his behaviour, and the meaning of the invisible world, may find expression in many kinds of social phenomena. However, as might be expected, some of these phenomena are particularly significant, as, for instance, folk-tales concerning the creation of the world and the arrival of the Batutsi in the country, proverbs, and forms of cult. To these special attention has been given.

The validity of an unstated cultural premiss will, of course, be established with more certainty if it is found implied in several and very different cultural phenomena. For instance, an analysis of the political structure may lead to the discovery of the principle of the fundamental inequality of the three castes of ancient Ruanda. The same principle is also implied in tales explaining the origin of the three groups and the sources of their social roles.

This study refers to the period when the Ruanda cult had not yet been subjected to the impact of Western culture. This is not very far back in time, for it seems that the first white man to be seen in Ruanda was Count von Götzen, who travelled through the country with a German scientific-military expedition in 1894. The first permanent occupation of the country was not more than fifty years ago, and important changes in the culture have

[1] The inhabitants of Ruanda.

4: Maquet E-5 (1950-1951) 1954 FO42 Rundi FO42

been brought only during the past thirty years. The present Ruanda culture has lost the coherence that existed in pre-European days. Those who have become more closely associated with alien activity, and have therefore felt its influence more constantly, now share a culture made up in part of their ancestral way of life and in part of their interpretation of the Belgian variety of Western culture as it operates in a colonial situation. Even those who have not been brought into direct contact with whites feel that their old patterns of life are losing their validity. But that more or less hidden part of the old culture, consisting of basic assumptions on the relationships of man with the world and with other men, has suffered the least change. To be sure, the legends of the descent of the first Batutsi meet with more scepticism than in the past, but the fundamental beliefs that this story reflects are still profoundly embedded in the Ruanda ethos. Even when new institutions, based on assumptions conflicting with the earlier ones, are imposed under external pressure and adopted, the principles shaping the older institutions will subsist and, if participation in the new institutions is unchecked, these will be completely reinterpreted in accordance with the former premises. Some manifestations of the continuing existence of the ancient assumptions in the contemporary context will be considered here, but we shall be mainly concerned with the Ruanda world-view as it was at the beginning of this century.[1]

Ruanda is a highland country in East Africa lying in the region delimited by lakes Kivu, Victoria, and Tanganyika. Its area is 24,500 square kilometres; its population amounts to almost 2 million inhabitants, the highest density in Africa south of the Sahara. Three socio-'racial' castes are to be

[1] Much of the material used in this study was collected by the author during two years' work (1950–1) in Ruanda as a social anthropologist of the *Institut pour la Recherche Scientifique en Afrique Centrale* (I.R.S.A.C.). The author was very much helped in his field research by Dr. E. Finoulst and Dr. G. De Clercq during their six-month course of training under his direction. Extensive and valuable information has been found in the published literature on Ruanda, especially studies by Father A. Arnoux, Abbé L. de Lacger, Abbé Alexis Kagame, the late Father A. Pagès, Mr. G. Sandrart, Father Schumacher, and Mr. J. Vanhove. The author is also grateful to the Abbé Kagame for having placed at his disposal some of his manuscripts. In formulating the conceptual and theoretical scheme used in this paper, the author has relied considerably on the teaching and works of Professor Clyde Kluckhohn of Harvard University. He is immensely indebted for his fundamental training in anthropology to the teaching staff of London University and particularly to Professor Daryll Forde. Mr. Lawrence Oschinsky has kindly corrected the manuscript. A short bibliography is given at the end, but it has not been felt necessary to document this study at every point, nor indeed was this possible, since it was written in the field with the use of a very restricted library.

This is an essay in the etymological meaning of the word. If the underlying configurations of a culture constitute its most important part, since they provide a key to the interrelatedness of apparently unconnected phenomena and to the meaning of apparently incomprehensible behaviour, they are also the most elusive realities. They evade direct observation and, often, direct interrogation. The anthropologist, therefore, must be sure that his inferences are logically acceptable not only to his own mind but also to the minds of the participants in the culture he studies. All this requires a thorough knowledge of the overt aspects of a culture and a long familiarity with them. The author is painfully aware that he has not gone very deeply into the ethos of Ruanda. This is only an attempt at a synthesis of the results so far obtained in researches which are still proceeding.

4: Maquet E-5 (1950-1951) 1954 FO42 Rundi FO42

qualification for the happy one is not to live a blameless life on earth, but to undergo initiation into the *Ryangombe* cult.

Thus the ethics of the Banyarwanda are not integrated on a religious basis such as the will of God. What is the principle of integration, or rather, we should first ask, are their ethical conceptions integrated? On the surface they consist, like any moral code, of a multiplicity of prohibitions, orders, and exhortations. Have they achieved a synthesis of these separate elements by reducing the multiplicity to one or a few principles? Or, what amounts to the same thing, could they give a definition of good and evil?

In Ruanda a great number of particular rules are subsumed under general principles such as: do not do what is harmful to people of your group or of your country; do what people related to you would like; submit to your superiors. Principles such as these are already on a higher level of abstraction than the particular rules. When informants are asked to account for a given rule or principle they give as the final justification: 'It has always been done that way in Ruanda.' We may perhaps express the Ruanda definition of good and evil in these terms: That is good (or evil) which tradition has defined as good (or evil).

Tradition is indeed a powerful force in cultures which, as in Ruanda, have been isolated for centuries from world currents. Each generation is more conscious of the importance of what it has received from the preceding one than is possible when much of what constitutes its way of life comes not from its ancestors but from some other social tradition. Moreover, their relations with their neighbours whom they frequently subjugated have persuaded Banyarwanda of the excellence of the ways of life transmitted by their forefathers. In such a situation the traditional character of a rule appears to be sufficient justification. If the ancestors, who were so wise, behaved in that way it would be preposterous to question it.

But it would be misleading to picture the Banyarwanda as following blindly the moral rules framed in a remote past without having any idea of their purpose. Some old men have a clear understanding of the social significance of certain rules. They explained, for example, that the duality of the rules concerning adultery committed by the husband or by the wife was accounted for by the importance of the wife's function in procreation. She has thus a greater responsibility than the husband for maintaining the integrity of the family.

Does this kind of thinking extend so far as independence of tradition? Some informants told us that, apart from the authority of custom, some actions were thought of as dishonourable in themselves. But these informants were Christians and, apparently, very much influenced by their religion. Moreover, they could not quote a clear case of conflict between tradition and ethics.

No moral code can achieve an absolute character in all its precepts. Prohibitions and commands frequently relate only to certain categories of persons and situations. Even the Christian Western ethic, which realizes to

643 along the road, to the sanctimonious applause of his entourage. Once
661 he even tried his spear against one of his chief lieutenants. The latter had the audacity to evade the blow, pick up the weapon, and hurl it back at him with equal skill. The king managed to duck and showed no displeasure, at least on that day. He even congratulated the man for his boldness and courage and said that he was a "man" (umugabo).

This scene was enacted more than once during the same reign. The unfortunate men who served as targets to the spirited monarch, however, lacked sufficient audacity, and especially good fortune, to get away...with such amiable words.

Under the reign of the present monarch, Yuhi IV Musinga,
[687] from the time of his accession to the throne and prior to European penetration, the famous Ndamutsa drum often heralded one or several executions. Aside from the crime of sorcery it was enough to be denounced, rightly or wrongly, as having spoken poorly of the king and queen mother. Such crimes were punished on short order and briskly.

Public rumor has it that the young king tried his first gun shot on a madman. He hit him point blank.

The courtiers who were present at this murder scene emitted frenzied bravos to applaud the supreme skill of His Majesty.

[177] European influence and supervision alone managed to bring to an end this state of affairs and this kind of behavior, which in the natives' way of thought only served to accentuate the majesty and power of the king. /381/ It does not follow that this change made the pagan Blacks any happier, for they were awed by the ancient customs and the bloody displays of brute force.

671 In principle, justice was the king's justice, since as the saying goes, "the king is the law." For the sake of truthfulness, however, it must be added that there is a set of laws in existence. It is certainly not a complete code, but it nevertheless includes a series of laws and practices adding up to a veritable common law which, had it been rigorously applied, would have avoided many an extortion and cruelty. Gradually, over the centuries, a special procedure had been established for litigations bearing on property rights, inheritance rights, matrimonial rights and bride price, physical damage such as

698 in the liquid, such are the ingredients of this drink which is prepared for God's judgment.

A small piece of iron, kadigi, which is believed to have a magic property, is tossed into the vessel. Gravity and solemnity are the rule during sessions of this kind. A drinking tube is given to the accused to take the poison. Some people are made seriously ill by it, while others are able to "relieve" themselves almost immediately, which goes to prove their innocence.

F. The chick test. The accused are given small chicks which have just hatched. Each of them must hold one in his hand under the supervision of watchmen who are supposed to prevent tricks and infractions in the proceedings. The chick which survives the lack of food for the longest period of time (about one day and one night) proves "in its own way" the honesty of its lucky owner.

G. The boiling water test, so well known and so popular in the Middle Ages. The procedure is the same.

The numbers and kinds of ordeals vary among the provinces of Ruanda. Many of them were borrowed from neighboring lands with which the Banyarwanda have frequent contact.

[77] Up to now, both plaintiffs and defendants had frequent recourse to those methods. The introduction of European tribunals has dealt a death blow to tests of this sort, which occur in the beginnings of every civilization. /425/

Chapter 3

Rain Makers or Tempest Makers (Ababvubyi). Protectors Against Lightning (Abagangahuzi). Ravagers of Crops and Fields (Abahoryo).

791 Owing to the people's credulity, the services of these personages are among the most valued and also the most lucrative. They seldom live at the capital, or go there only occasionally when summoned expressly.

5: Pages--291 M-5 (ca. 1925) 1933 FO42 Rundi FO42

Family umbrella.

291
293
142
[302]

A semicivilized (person).

[177]

441 is placed more towards the back, sometimes, toward the front. The length of the head also varies.

The typical Batutsi spear is more than two meters long and has a very characteristic lance-shaped head. The head flares out at the base; the first third of it tapers, then it gradually widens, but very little, to the final quarter and ends in a rounded point.

The Bahutu spears differ first of all in that they are less carefully made, but they also have spears which are simply drop forged without grooving and which have very simple forms. Among [177] the Bahutu I also observed many spears strikingly similar in shape to those used in neighboring territories, and these were either brought back by the Bahutu or made by them from foreign models. They usually knew the origin of these spears. Thus the one shown in Figure 92 was called ichumu ryo Rutshuga lwa Ruhima. This means a Bahima spear from Rutshuga. As is well known, these forms are commonly used by the Bahima in Nkole and Karagwe.

The models shown in Figures 93 and 94 suggest either Bahima country or perhaps Toro, where I saw them in large numbers. I was not convinced, however, that these were indigenous and had not been brought from Nkole. There I saw spears with barbs as well as some with two blades, one above the other either on one plane or at right angles to each other. Figure 93 was called ichimu lyo Lugobe and Figure 94, ichumu lya Mugaanne. The spear shown in Figure 95 strongly resembles the Buganda spears, but the model for this illustration was forged in Kihinga and was called ichumu lyi Kihinga. The types in Figures 96 and 97 suggest the neighboring Congo Basin. The first was called ichumu lyi Nyunga, the latter, ichumu lyi Lilera. In Bugoye and Mulera spears from Barega are not uncommon. They are [186] preferred there by elephant hunters. They have thick shafts and strong heads, and, in form, they remind one of the spear shown in Figure 96.

[187] In those drop-forged spears having a groove, the lower portions of the blade are left black, and only the middle rib and the edges of the blade, three to five millimeters wide, or sometimes the upper half, are smoothly polished. The sharpness of the contrast between black and white is the criterion for its beauty and elegance.

681 Punishment by whipping seems to be done less in Ruanda than in Bgisha where the chief ties people to trees and has them punished with up to 100 strokes of the whip on their backs. This [177] custom is said to have been borrowed from the English Askari who were stationed there.

On the subject of property rights we wish to make only a 423 few general remarks. The entire country is the private property 428 of the king and is regarded as either entrusted to the chiefs or granted to the clans. All the farmers and herdsmen are merely tenants or have the use of the land. As a consequence, the chief and clan community have the final word in matters dealing with the inheritance of usufruct of so-called crown property, that is, fields and cattle.

422 Only household goods, with the exception of cows, are private 428 property in our sense, and here the wish of the person disposing of the property is decisive, although certain time-honored customs cannot be circumvented. In Bugoye, for example, the oldest son gets the spear and the stool of his father, whereas the shield belongs to the youngest son. (2) Lieutenant Spiltoire told me that in

2. Classe, Father, Moeurs et Coutumes des Bagoye [Manners and Customs of the Bugoye] (Les Missions Catholiques, 1905), p. 439.

Bunyabungu, the principal heir seems to be the son of the sister, but because of his brief visit, he could not verify this.

692 Administration of Justice. In Ruanda the administration of 695 justice is in the hands of the chiefs and the king.

Pronouncing judgment is only of secondary importance, but [280] the chiefs regard it as a sure means of gaining influence. The two parties regard the trial as an attempt to interest a powerful one -- a chief -- in their affairs, that is to say, to make their affairs the affairs of the mighty. The one who wins a case is simply the one who was more highly regarded by the chief and with whom, from now on, it is dangerous to quarrel. In Ruanda it is a long process from the pronouncement of justice to the execution of it.

their history, but they regard it as a hallowed secret of the Batutsi which belongs to the category of ibanga [secrets].

Father F. Dufays and Father P. Loupias succeeded in learning about one of the traditions of ancient times from a Mututsi whom I personally know very well but whose name I must withhold out of consideration for his own safety. The man clashed with his fellow tribesmen [287] and told his story to the missionaries to express his gratitude for their protection.

According to this story, human beings in former times lived in heaven as well as on the earth. The children of Nyina Kigwa, Kigwa, Lututsi, and their sister, Nyina Batutsi, were cast out from heaven as a punishment for their mother's loquacity. They fell to earth in Bugansa, Ruanda, and discovered the following Bahutu families in the country: the Basinga, Bagessera, and Bazigaba. In the forest they found the Batwa. The Bahutu and Batwa had been expelled from heaven before them. The new immigrants brought fire, agriculture (hoe culture), cattle raising, and industry (iron technique). In this way they gained influence; and Kigwa became the ruler of Ruanda. Kigwa married his sister, Nyina Batutsi, and became the protoplast of the Banieginia who are descended from his three sons and still rule Ruanda. Lututsi emigrated to Karagwe and married one of Kigwa's three daughters. He became the protoplast of the Bega who supply the kings of Ruanda with wives and mothers who are their peers. Kigwa and his descendants kept in touch with heaven through Batabazi redeemers, who came to their aid in times of great need. There are three chief Batabazi mentioned. The first protected the children of Nyina Batutsi and brought animals to Ruanda; the second was Kihana, son of King Ndahiro; and the third, Kyamweru, was the son of King Luzugira Iwijuru.

This tradition contains some details of Christian legends, which we shall not go into here. Its origin will probably be determined some day, but at present it is a mystery. However, the statement that the children of Nyina Kigwa (referring doubtless to the Batutsi) brought fire and hoe culture into the country can be written off as historically incorrect. In any case, it is certain that this story tells us about the settling of the Batutsi in Ruanda and the establishment of their rule in Bugansa, and that at this time Bagessera,

000 which have affected each other, the Batutsi and the Bahutu.

794 575 825 The importance of the dog among babandwa merits special attention. I was assured that the dog is the cow, that is, the most important and sacred animal, of the babandwa. I was unable to find out anything more specific about its role in the cult. The adherents of the theory that the states of central [777] Africa represent vestiges of Egyptian culture might see in the relationship of the dog to the cult of the "lord of departed souls" a reflection of Anubis who had the head of a dog.

794 575 The babandwa exert their power as medicine men, sacrificers, and soothsayers. These three functions are very closely related to each other and can hardly be separated. Besides the babandwa and the worshippers of Biheko, the balozi [poisoners] are also said to constitute a secret society.

Initiation. Initiation into a secret society is bound up with long and complicated ceremonies. There are two categories of consecrated ones, those who are fully consecrated and those who have undergone only the preliminary tests.

[308] I should now like to try to give a picture of the babandwa initiation ceremonies in Ruanda, which are very strictly kept secret.

The picture, pieced together by means of painstaking questions, shows a resemblance in the main with the description by Father Van Thiele of Ussuwi, although the arrangement of the whole ceremony seems to bring out some differences.

If a person who is to be accepted into the secret society of babandwa, for example, a sick person, as generally happens, has been told by the chicken oracle that he can be cured by initiation, he must bring gifts to the consecrated to make them favorably disposed toward him.

First of all an influential member is visited, one who might agree to act as guardian (godfather). The guardian, who is also called "father," invites the rest of the initiated into the house of the candidate for initiation.

Certain preparations must be made and a number of objects assembled before the initiation ceremony can take place. The candidate provides a sword, a bell, a torch, a large quantity of beer, and food supplies.

[i.e. Secret society members—Analyst]

8: Hall G-5 (1929-31) 1938 FO42 Rundi FO42

suggestions there are of the effect of latter-day conceptions in superimposing themselves upon and modifying primitive law. Before going on to this, it should be added (what does not appear from the record) first, that the society of Bugufi is symbiotic, with a pastoral Tusi aristocracy, headed by a chief, dominating a semi-servile Hutu agricultural population, who largely outnumber the Tusi: secondly, that there have in Bugufi been strong forces making for change, quite apart from European administrative control. To go into these changes in detail is quite outside the scope of the present paper. It may be briefly mentioned, however, that the relative status of Tusi and Hutu is in process of rapid alteration, owing to the opportunities afforded to the Hutu under modern conditions of acquiring independent wealth, both through their labour (chiefly in Uganda) and latterly by the establishment in Bugufi of an economic crop, coffee. This change has meant maladjustment of the tribal structure. The chief sees in the economic independence of the Hutu an encroachment on his rights: and the Hutu regard the assertion of those rights as oppression. This conflict, together with the mental immaturity of the chief and the distance of the chiefdom—four days' march—from an administrative station, made it necessary for the government to establish a check in the form of a 'Native Adviser'. This system continued until early 1930, by which time an administrative station had been opened near the chief's head-quarters, and, he having shown signs of development, it was felt that an opportunity should be afforded the chief of ruling his country without the restriction of an adviser who was really a controller most of the time. These advisers, three in all, were alien to Bugufi. The first came from Bukoba, on Lake Victoria, where he later became town headman: the second was of Arab descent, having come from Urundi to live in Bugufi, where he had been settled for many years and enjoyed considerable respect: the last, a native of really fine character, who made every effort to train the chief for his work, was a Muziba from Bukoba District. All of them were charged with the dispensing of justice according to native law and custom—subject to altered concepts of crime, already imposed by the European régime, and to a general instruction to curb the oppressiveness of the chief, an instruction the interpretation of which might depend partly on the system of native law under which the adviser had been brought

9: Maquet E-5 (1949-1951) 1961 FO42 Rundi FO42

INTRODUCTION

THE greater part of this work is directly concerned with the description and analysis of the political organization of Ruanda. The first chapters, however, are devoted to other aspects of the social system: kinship and affinity, marriage and family. As the whole system of social relations in Ruanda constituted a closely knit fabric, it was thought that an understanding of the political institutions necessitates also some treatment of the other structures of human relations. Moreover, a brief account of the physical environment, the quest for food, shelter, and health, and some demographic data have been included because these elements, if external to the pattern of political relations, set the limits within which the Ruanda system of domination grew.

This study refers to the period immediately preceding the time when Ruanda was submitted to the influence of Western culture through its European agents. That is to say, in the continuously moving historical stream, we have chosen to study the particular configuration of the Ruanda political organization at the moment when it had been moulded by the action of many forces, but not by the full impact of European contacts. For reasons mentioned later, the 'zero point' of direct European influence on Ruanda society is not difficult to assess. It is in the first decade of this century. Ruanda social structure did not undergo any significant modification due to European influence until roughly 1910. This date is fortunately not very distant, and around 1950 it was still possible to interview many people who had been young when the old régime was still a working concern. As far as we know, there had been also no direct and continuous contact between Arabs and Ruanda prior to that time.

To remind the reader that we are describing structures and institutions which no longer exist, at least in their entirety, my account is given in the past tense even when it refers to features which are still functioning today. The expressions 'today', 'now', 'at the present time', &c., refer to the period 1950–1 during which basic research was carried out in Ruanda.

As a social anthropologist of the *Institut pour la Recherche Scientifique en Afrique Centrale*, I carried out field work in Ruanda

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April. Tillage of fallow-land in preparation for potato planting next month. Planting of yams, gourds.

May and first half of June. Second tillage of sorghum fields. Beans were weeded. Potatoes were planted. Banana groves were cleared of grass. Cassava planted on hill-tops was gathered.

Long dry season

June, second part. Sweet potatoes and cassava planted in the bottom of valleys. Granaries were stocked.

July. Harvesting of beans, sorghum, maize.

August. Tillage of soil.

September. Tillage went on. At the end of the month there could be an early sowing of beans.[20]

In agricultural tasks, there was no specialization by sex. Men and women worked together in the fields. Although to a large extent the Hutu culture was permeated by the Tutsi scale of values, they did not share the noblemen's disdain for agricultural work. Their ideal type of successful man was that of a rich and hard-working peasant. They were proud of such a reputation when they achieved it, although they recognized that the status of a powerful Tutsi was much higher. But it belonged to another order practically closed to them. In a hierarchical society, certain ideal types may embody values that are for a lower stratum at the same time supreme but not sought after.

Cattle were never reared for their meat in Ruanda. The Tutsi and Hutu appreciated meat very much, but cattle were not usually slaughtered just to be eaten, except occasionally as when a barren cow was getting old. But the contribution of cattle to the diet was great: milk and butter were the food *par excellence* for Tutsi noblemen. The Hutu also liked dairy products very much, but a good supply of them required a larger number of cows than a Hutu would normally possess. Only cows feeding calves were milked. During the dry season their production was very low. In recent years, the average milk production was only from 1 to 1·5 litres a day (from about 1¾ pints to 2¼ pints) including that taken by the calf. Hides were formerly used for clothing purposes.

As may be expected in a society dominated by pastoralists, livestock was a major focus of interest in Ruanda culture. Its importance in the political structure—which will be considered

[20] See Schumacher, 1942 and Evereerts, 1947, pp. 61-69.

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It should also be pointed out that the supply of the staple foods was usually short at the end of the dry season and that starvation periods, in which many people died, were occurring several times in a life-time. For instance in a thirty-year period (1900–30) among the events used as references to assess the age of people, three famines are remembered: in 1908, 1918, and 1924.

The above considerations take into account only the total production of available food in the country. But it is obvious that in a society composed of several groups very unequal in power, access to food was not the same for everybody. It seems that we may safely infer that the normal diet of many Hutu was barely adequate to sustain people who had to spend a considerable amount of physical effort in agricultural tasks.

In the preparation of meals, two facts relevant to health should be mentioned. Firstly, the methods of cooking very often resulted in a diminution of the nutritive value of food. For instance, beans cooked in water lose from one-sixth to one-fifth of their carbohydrates.[27] Secondly, the standards of cleanliness in food preparation were very high among the Tutsi, though more for magical than for hygienic reasons. This applies particularly to milk. To avoid flies and dust, receptacles containing milk were always closed with basketwork conic covers adorned with elongated geometric patterns. It is believed that if milk comes into contact with anything impure, the cow would be harmed. The contaminating substances were not always connected with the Western idea of dirtiness. For instance water was considered dangerous to milk. Consequently the wooden vessels in which milk was kept were not washed out with water but with cows' urine.

The equatorial situation of Ruanda, combined with the rather cold climate due to its elevation, resulted in the spreading of diseases characteristic of tropical as well as of temperate regions. Yaws, typhoid fever, tuberculosis, recurring fevers, and a large variety of intestinal diseases are quite common in Ruanda today.[28] They are not new diseases resulting from new conditions introduced by the European occupation, such as malaria, which was unknown in Ruanda except in the narrow strip adjacent to the Ruzizi River until roads were built permitting a very rapid transportation of people, or some venereal diseases which spread

[27] Ministère des Colonies, 1951b, p. 49-51.
[28] Cf. Lestrade, 1955; Vincent, 1953, pp. 16-18.

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from the great commercial centres where there is an important transient foreign population of Africans from the Congo, Arabs, Indians, and Europeans. They are not new in so far as the factors favouring their spread have been in existence for a very long time. I have already mentioned the inadequate clothing of children. Bark-cloth and hides which were not washed, grass and reed huts and enclosures where cattle were living near the dwellings, which were never built in the valleys, were effective deterrents to corporal cleanliness. The Tutsi took hot baths and washed and rubbed themselves with perfumed butter, but the Hutu, particularly the women, did not seem to wash completely very often, if ever.[29]

Defences against these diseases were, as one may expect, very inferior compared with those which Western medical science can now provide. When somebody was ill and the usual remedies known to every old person did not work, he had to have recourse to a herbal expert. I have been told by a missionary who had studied the question for several years that knowledge of these medicinal plants was very often extremely penetrating and that cures, especially in dysentery and other intestinal diseases, were quite often successful. These remedies were collected or administered in a magical context. When that course of action did not produce the expected results, the diviner (*mupfumu*) had to be consulted. He was an interpreter of the will of God (Imana), which he could read in the patterns made by knuckle-bones, in the viscera of chickens, rams, and bulls, or even by a certain intuition without the help of any apparatus. Some diviners used a medium, usually a female possessed by Biheko, an important spirit of the dead, or were possessed themselves. The diviner was asked to identify the malevolent agent sending the illness, which could be either a *muzimu* (spirit of a dead person) or a *muroxi* (sorcerer). If the spirit was identified, the diviner could tell what would appease him, and could offer some counter-magic to deal with a sorcerer.[30]

These resorts to the non-material world probably had the useful function of making bearable a situation in which nothing could otherwise be done to alter the course of the illness. It is doubtful, however, if this method had any other effect on the patient's health.

[29] Cf. Czekanowski, 1917, pp. 118-21. [30] See photographs in Maquet, 1957.

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is made narrower in order to give everybody the opportunity of obtaining sufficient personal security.

Such was, it appears, the first function of the *buhake* system in Ruanda. In that society where it was advisable to go into court accompanied by socially powerful persons, and when a Hutu possessing some wealth but no protector was risking the loss of his possessions, the feudal organization, by institutionalizing the identification of the Hutu client with the Tutsi lord, secured the necessary protection and security for the socially weak. With a few exceptions, the Twa were outside that feudal system. Their caste occupations were not compatible with cattle-rearing and made available to them other means of obtaining the personal protection of upper caste people. On the other hand, their small number made that kind of protection very effective.

(*d*) *Social cohesion*

A second function of the feudality in Ruanda was its contribution to the cohesion of the society.

In this respect we have to distinguish the feudal agreements in which clients were Hutu from those in which they were Tutsi. Let us first take the former. In order that two castes whose interests were so often divergent or opposed could constitute a stable unitary structure, it was necessary that they should not remain merely juxtaposed but should show some solidarity. Through the feudal relations economic currents flowed between Hutu and Tutsi: the land tillers had at their disposal some cattle; the pastoralists consumed agricultural produce and had fields cultivated by their servants and clients. In this way the economic system of production in Ruanda was mixed, made up of techniques, abilities, and wealth brought by the two groups. Through *buhake*, Hutu participated in the Tutsi values. They valued cattle very highly and entered the prestige system based on bovine possession. They assimilated some Tutsi alimentary habits, such as drinking milk. Feudality proved a very effective instrument for the constitution of a culture common to all Ruanda.

When there was a feudal agreement between two Tutsi, the *buhake* had another relevance to social cohesion. It may be said that any Tutsi client was also a lord and any Tutsi lord was also a client. The mwami was the only patron who was nobody's client. His *garagu* were the great Tutsi chiefs, the lords of less important

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571 inferior to the other to claim some particular fulfilment of the
675 agreed promises from the other.

554 This appears clearly in the difficulties Ruanda often meet
[177] when they have to adjust themselves to European labour contracts. They are sometimes confused by the fact that the employer
[829] requires from them at the same time less and more than they expect. Less because the employer does not ask for more services, for longer office hours for instance, than what has been stipulated, and more because he is very exacting in the execution of what has been undertaken, for instance in matters of punctuality.

Theorem Five

571 With such socially accepted conceptions about inequality, those
156 who occupy the superior positions in most of the social relations
554 in which they are involved, tend to develop a permanent authoritarian behaviour. This is characterized by a propensity to command, to be self-assertive, arrogant, protective, and compassionate.

Chiefs, rulers, and other superiors try to extend not only the size or range of their power (the number of people controlled) but its density (the degree of control of the subordinates).[7] Any independence manifested by the inferior will be resented as rebellious.

This leads to intolerance. The superior's opinions should never
[829] be opposed by the inferior who is always and everywhere expected to manifest his dependence by attitudes of compliance. Even today this conduct tends to prevail. Some years ago a Ruanda deliberative assembly of people of standing was asked its opinion on a contemplated reform. After the most important person present there had given his opinion, everybody voted for his proposal. But after the meeting many expressed privately their divergent opinions. At the time of the vote, they had considered it improper and impolite not to agree with the superior.

Theorem Six

571 Even if the caste system and political and feudal institutions
156 have succeeded to a large extent in moulding personalities in such a way as to make inferiors self-effacing, submissive, compliant,
[181] and dependent, the conditioning has not been perfect. Often the inferior wants to disagree with his superior's opinions, to avoid executing an order or obeying his commands. A straight refusal

[7] Cf. Russell, 1938, pp. 163 *f.*

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as his private property. No Rundi had rights, power, lands, or cows, except as the *mwami* granted. He distributed his lands and cows and administrative power to those of his brothers and parallel cousins who were on his side in the political battles. These *baganwa*, today called "chiefs", become the vassals of the *mwami*. The *baganwa* distributed the lands and cows they received to *batware*, captains, today called "sub-chiefs", who became their vassals and who in turn procured vassals for themselves by giving to their inferiors small plots of land and a cow here and there. Changes resulting from European influence are gradually eliminating the feudal characteristics of the social system. However, the principle and the order of the hierarchy have so far remained unchanged.

Below the princes in the hierarchy are the *abafasoni*, nobles, those who were once princes but who at the fifth generation are so no longer and who will one day be numbered among the commoners. To describe the commoners, it is necessary to take account of the three *aboko*, castes—the Tutsi, the Hutu and the Twa.[6] The Tutsi are by far of the highest rank among the commoners. Although they make up only ten per cent of the population, they are the masters of the Hutu, who make up more than 85 per cent of the population. It is believed that the Tutsi are of Hamitic or Nilo-Hamitic origin, whereas the Hutu are clearly a part of the Bantu hoe-culture, characteristic of East and Central Africa.[7] Burundi is beyond doubt a "cattle-complex" country. The Tutsi are herders, and nobody debates the superiority of the herders. It is said that the Tutsi, once formidable warriors, on their arrival in the country about three centuries ago, had no need to conquer the Hutu by using their spears. The Hutu to this day willingly become the serfs of the herders in order to receive cows from them. Between the princes and the Tutsi, there is very little difference in rank. Between the rank of the Tutsi and that of the Hutu, there is a very great difference. The Tutsi and the Tutsikazi disdain the Hutu and the Hutukazi, considering them their born servants. Nevertheless, the princes or the king sometimes appoint Hutu to be *batware*. A Hutu thus honoured is the political superior of the Tutsi under his authority. This circumstance in no way modifies his social inferiority. On the contrary, it exacerbates race prejudice. No social mechanism can change the caste in which an individual is born. The Tutsi do not drink with the Hutu, even when they become administrators, for one does not drink with one's social inferiors. The next downward step in the hierarchy takes us to the bottom of the social ladder and almost outside the society to the

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their friends, especially if they are away from home. A wife who always gives abundant beer and food to her husband's friends is, by so doing, showing respect for her husband.

Beauty does not count very heavily, but a man is not displeased if people notice that his wife is attractive and well-fleshed, has a long and narrow nose, a light skin, and is somewhat like a cow. If a woman is fortunate, she will have a child every two years, and the children will not die. One of the most fortunate women of whom the Rundi spoke—a Tutsikazi *imfura*, needless to say—gave birth to a child virtually every 11 months. The husband of a wife who produces many children is a real man, and people always speak highly of the fathers of many children.

A husband supervises his wife, as every superior supervises his inferiors, and he must punish her if she does not do as she ought. Hence, a Tutsi will not hesitate to go to see whether all the clothes he has given his wife are in the baskets that serve as wardrobes for women. He also goes to see if everything is clean. If he is not satisfied, he will warn his wife that she must change her ways. Sometimes she makes excuses. Perhaps she has not worked well because she has been ill, or because she had to do a great deal of work for her mother-in-law, because several of the workers have run off to Uganda, because her husband ordered more work than she had strength to do. A considerate husband will check up on his wife's explanations. If he is satisfied that they are correct, he will do his best to see that she has help, even if he has to help her himself. A man of bad character, however, does not accept any excuses. He will beat his wife, he will insult her, and she can expect to be sent back home, unless she becomes angry and goes back without waiting to be sent.

The Rundi speak a great deal about "good character" and "bad character". Character, for them, explains most of human behaviour. Obviously, the ideal marriage unites a woman of good character with a man of good character. However, there are a great many people of bad character, probably most people. This explains, they say, the numerous quarrels and divorces. People know what they ought to do, but they don't do it. In all truth, a young woman lives like a nomad. She goes from her father's home to the home of her first husband, then after quarrels or divorce back again to her father, then to a second husband, then back to her father, until at last she finds a husband who pleases her and who at the same time is pleased with her. Divorce is forbidden those who are Catholics. Nevertheless, for them as for the other Rundi, married life is no more peaceful than any other interpersonal relationship among the

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Women of Burundi: A Study of Social Values

Many children represent happiness for both men and women in Burundi. Women adore babies, and a pregnant Rundikazi is a happy woman. Only very rarely do women go into the bush to look for the medicines that cause miscarriage. (For unwed mothers, the motivation is obviously different). It is not possible to find a Rundikazi, even a great-grandmother, who will admit that she is *umukechuru*, a woman beyond the age of child-bearing. A woman who is sterile, or who has had only one child and never again conceived believes that she has been cursed by her paternal aunt or is the victim of witchcraft. Some women produce Gargantuas, children they have carried for 11 months, or 15 months or even two years. The Rundi are by no means ignorant of the biological cause and signs of pregnancy.[16] They simply refuse to acknowledge any other alternative conditions than pregnancy or nursing mother. It is also not for a lack of knowledge of the biological facts that men have no interest in the biological paternity of their children. If a brother or cousin is the biological father, this is no more than is to be expected. If it is a stranger who has got his wife with child, he has made the husband a free gift. The father does not reproach his wife if she has conceived during one of his long absences from home, nor is he at all prejudiced against those of his children who have been fathered by other men, when the time comes to choose his heritor.[17]

Among the princes and the Tutsi of the very good patrilineages, the mother does not take care of the children except to nurse them. A governess, a woman from a family only slightly lower in the social scale than that of the child, looks after it. At present, the wealthy send their school-age children to European schools far from home. In the past, young adolescents were sent to be brought up by princes and princesses. Among the commoners, an infant is with its mother day and night. He is carried nude on her naked back and nursed at the first whimper. The mother plays with her baby, especially with her son, tickles it everywhere, and talks baby talk to it. She adores her baby, but the moment she finds herself pregnant again, she immediately weans her child. The child, who is probably between 18 and 24 months old, is abruptly separated from his mother. He is handed over to a brother, a sister, a grandmother, to anyone who will have him. Sometimes, the grandmother or a grown-up sister will permit a newly-weaned child to suck at the dry breast, but soon the child is put on the ground to crawl about, to play, and to learn that life is hard. It is not surprising that the mortality rate of newly-weaned children is very high.

If there has been a divorce, the departing wife takes with her